

Mp3 Ike - Parallel Universe



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Philadelphia POWER POP believers IKE inhabit a world where bands like the Pretenders and the Attractions used to live. No stylistic boundaries and proof that great songs can still come from loud rock

13 MP3 Songs ROCK: Modern Rock, ROCK: Emo Details: With the March 2003 release of their full-length CD "Parallel Universe," Philadelphia-based power popsters IKE have a lot of people to thank. While many modern rock bands boast some pretty loyal fan bases, IKE's listeners put their money where their collective mouth is, donating nearly \$18,000 into a recording fund that has yielded stellar results. The groundswell of fan support started after a band email, reporting on the group's less-than-speedy recording progress, half-jokingly asked that "anyone willing to become a 'patron of the arts' drop us a line." Before he knew it, frontman and songwriter John Faye started hearing from some of the band's most loyal supporters, all offering to put up their hard-earned cash to ensure their favorite IKE songs made it onto CD. But in spite of the financial burden being lifted, the road to completion was nowhere near smooth. After nearly half the album was recorded, a computer hard-drive containing the band's tracks crashed during a routine back-up, effectively sending the songs into their own parallel universe, untouchable "even by those data retrieval guys who wear the orange space suits and work in sterile rooms with no light," quips Faye, who kept the news from the rest of the band during the painful week-long wait while the hard-drive was actually in the hands of the aforementioned computer techs. When the studio informed John that there was no hope of getting the recordings back, "it was like 'somebody up there is definitely against me!' I can laugh about it now because we were able to go and re-cut everything better than it originally was, and we have a great record on our hands, but at the time, I was ready to do some damage." Luckily, neither Faye, nor the other members of IKE went off the deep end; instead they methodically rebuilt the record, using the opportunity to reevaluate song selection, even

write a couple new ones. Built on radio-ready hooks and straight-from-the-heart (or straight-for-the-carotid) lyrics, "Parallel Universe" (released on the band's own Bisbee Roadkill label) delivers its goods with equal parts abandon and clarity. Guitarist Cliff Hillis, drummer Dave Anthony, and bassist Joann Schmidt (all alumni from the touring line-up of Faye's millennial solo project The John Faye Power Trip) add color and fury to the tightly wound compositions, while Faye's immediately recognizable voice vacillates between rage and empathy, coming off something like Elvis Costello's long-lost nephew. Produced mainly by Atlanta studio wonderboy Don McCollister (Sister Hazel, Indigo Girls), with two cuts produced by former Marvelous 3 frontguy Butch Walker (the Grammy-nominated Bowling For Soup, SR-71), and mastered by the legendary Greg Calbi at Sterling Sound, the record covers a wide array of topics, ranging from Faye's very recent journey into fatherhood ("Welcome Home," "Big Wave"), to a study in passive-aggression ("Deathbed"), to a pay-back fantasy for a friend killed in a car accident (the aptly titled "Revenge"), to a tribute to fallen musical hero Joey Ramone (the decidedly non-punk "Pure"). And of course there's a healthy handful of the kind of tainted love songs that Faye seems to thrive on. "Memory," "Dandelion," and "Never Take It Back" all focus on the things you want but can't have, or the things that were but no longer are. "I guess parenthood has made me a little bi-polar," explains Faye, noting that "all the intense happiness of seeing your first child begin her life makes someone like me immediately realize how much there is to lose, so that's why some of those darker songs came out, but they're balanced by the most optimistic songs I've ever written. I like to think of the record as being a place where optimism and pessimism run into each other on the street and decide to have a nooner." And the buzz on "Parallel Universe" has already begun. The CD's lead track, "Deathbed (Na, Na, Na)," has been featured in two episodes of the current season of "Fashion TV" on the E! television network, continuing an impressive string of successful placements of John Faye's songs in TV and film. Two other IKE tracks were also used in the soon-to-be-completed independent film "Insanity," which is to be entered in the next Sundance Film Festival. Faye's past soundtrack credits include the Disney film "The Babysitters Club" and "MTV Undressed." Television and movie exposure aside, IKE plans to tour extensively in 2003 to support "P.U." In addition to traditional concert dates, where they have shared stages with the likes of REM, Train, Cracker, Better Than Ezra, America (!), and toured extensively with Matthew Sweet, the band will focus on creating their own events at small theaters and schools, and also continue to perform their very successful "Living Room" shows in private homes. "It's a total guerilla war

as far as we see it. We've seen the effect that our music has had on the people we've been lucky enough to reach on such an indie level, and we're ready to take it as far as we can wherever it leads us," states John Faye bluntly. "IT KEEPS EVOLVING..."

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